

REMARKS

Claims 1-14, 16-45 and 47-63 are pending in this application. In light of the submissions and remarks made herein, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections.

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by *Ito et al.* (USP 6,967,675); rejected claims 1, 3, 4, 14, 30, 32 and 33 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Suzuki* (USP 5,724,579) in view of *Ichihara* (USP 6,977,680); and rejected claims 2 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Suzuki* in view of *Ichihara* and further in view of *Nanba* (USP 6,297,870). The remainder of the claims have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) using a variety of combinations of references. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102(e) – *Ito et al.*

The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) asserting they are anticipated by the teachings of *Ito et al.* By this amendment, Applicant is submitting herewith a certified translation of Applicant's priority document Japanese Patent Application No. 2000-113379, thereby establishing a perfected priority date of April 14, 2000.

Applicant respectfully submits that as the effective filing date of *Ito et al.* is October 26, 2000, Applicant's filing of the certified translation of Applicant's priority document removes *Ito et al.* as prior art with respect to the present application. As such, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding rejection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner rejected the remainder of the claims using a combination of references including *Ichihara*. Applicant is submitting herewith a Declaration of Prior Invention in a WTO Member Country to Overcome a Cited Patent Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.131 executed by the inventor, Satoshi Okamoto. This Declaration provides sufficient evidence establishing date of

invention of the subject matter of the present application prior to the filing date of March 27, 2000, by *Ichihara*. The Declaration further provides Exhibits A-D that establish proper diligence from just prior to the effective date of *Ichihara*, namely March 27, 2000, through the perfected filing date of April 14, 2000. Based upon this submission, Applicant respectfully submits that *Ichihara* is not prior art with respect to the present invention.

As the Examiner relies on the teachings of *Ichihara* in support of his rejection of the remaining claims, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding rejection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

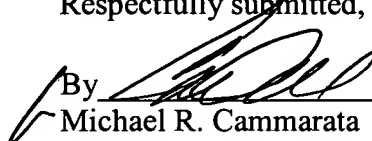
In view of the above remarks, it is believed that claims are allowable.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Catherine M. Voisin Reg. No. 52,327 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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